REAL LIVING OPTIONS
ASSOCIATION INC.
"Supporting a lifestyle for people with a disability"

MEDIA RELATIONS

POLICY NUMBER: NDIS GOV 25

INTENT

The intention of this Policy is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media and to identify personnel who will be approved as representatives of the Association.

DEFINITION

Media Relations involves:

- Working with media for the purpose of informing the public of an Organisation's Mission, Values, Policies and Practices in a positive, consistent and credible manner.
- A working knowledge of television, radio, digital and print journalism and skills in establishing a controlled, positive image in the media for a company, person, or organisation.

POLICY STATEMENTS

- Local, state and national media are vital partners in achieving the goals of Real Living Options Association Inc. In order to maximise the advantages of media presentation and minimise the risks of media misrepresentation, it is necessary to establish guidelines for how media contacts will be conducted.
- Staff, Management Committee members and other volunteers should be conscious that they may be seen as representatives of the Organisation and should therefore avoid making comments or participating in photo opportunities that may damage the long-term reputation of Real Living Options Association Inc.
- Significant statements on behalf of Real Living Options Association Inc. shall be made as authorised by the President or General Manager.
- All staff and Management Committee members must observe the Privacy Policy of the Association in relation to Service User (Participant) records and any information provided to the media.
- At all times consideration should be given as to how any information/correspondence may affect the reputation of Real Living Options Association Inc.
- It is to be made absolutely clear whether the views put forward regarding any issue, are those of the Organisation or of an individual.
- Contact concerning any significant matter on behalf of Real Living Options Association Inc. will only be made by Staff and/or Management Committee members when they have consulted the President and/or the General Manager.

Purpose

- Real Living Options Association Inc. works with the media in order to:
    - advocate for the goals of the Service
    - promote the work of the Service
    - inform the public of the details of the Service

- assist in fundraising for the Service

- In order to ensure that these purposes can be fulfilled, this policy regulates the choice of people entitled to speak on behalf of Real Living Options Association Inc.
- Real Living Options Association Inc. must have the capacity to defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts (if necessary using other channels of communication).
- This policy deals with the day-today relationship between Real Living Options Association Inc. and the media and does not address how the Service will work with the media in a crisis.

Core Values

- Real Living Options Association Inc. operates on the values of:
  - **Honesty:** The organisation will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story.
  - **Transparency:** The organisation will promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
  - **Clarity:** All communications with the media will be written in plain English.
  - **Balance:** Information provided to the media by Real Living Options Association Inc. will as far as humanly possible be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.
- Real Living Options Association Inc. should seek to establish and maintain a good and open relationship with the media. It is important that the organisation works with the media to communicate important public information messages about its work and its goals.

PROCEDURES

- The General Manager and the President are authorised to speak on behalf of the Association.
- The General Manager will consult with the Management Committee regarding significant press releases or advertising.
- Every effort should be made to assist the media in their inquiries. Where media queries involve requests for information that will require substantial staff work to produce, such work must be authorised by the General Manager. It may be necessary to provide information in addition to that which is requested in order to set the facts and figures in context.
- Requests for detailed information of this nature, whether from the local or national media, should be referred to the General Manager.
- All media negotiations, press releases and significant advertising will be reported to the Management Committee

DELEGATIONS

Management Committee
Oversee relations with media

President
Authorise and negotiate with media in regard to public statements or advertising

General Manager
Authorise and negotiate with media in regard to public statements or advertising

RELATED DOCUMENTATION
NDIS Governance Policies

REFERENCES
NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
Privacy Act 1988 *(Cth)*

AMENDMENTS/REVIEWS

Amended 22.04.21 Amended 03.10.24